
A critique of Spanish and Portuguese claims to have discovered Australia – 1

by W.A.R. Richardson

Claims that the Spanish and especially the Portuguese discovered Australia before the Dutch and English have gained a good deal of credence since they were first advanced. The matter is of some interest to the Geelong area particularly as Bonito’s treasure at Queenscliff, the Geelong Keys and the Mahogany Ship near Warrnambool are often cited as “evidence.” In this article Bill Richardson makes a detailed examination of these claims. He is well qualified to do so: as well as being a Visiting Scholar at the Flinders University of South Australia, he has written over twenty publications on cartography and toponymy with further work in progress, and written reviews on books connected with the subject.

It is perhaps understandable that people of Spanish and Portuguese descent should be attracted by the idea that some of their forebears may have reached Australia before the Dutch did in 1606. However, despite the vast amount that has been written on the subject, especially in recent years with regard to the Portuguese claim, not one iota of trustworthy evidence has yet been produced.

The embarrassing absence of any known surviving map or document of Portuguese origin to provide concrete evidence of the Portuguese ‘discovery’, has been frequently explained by the famous policy of silence, and the 1755 Lisbon earthquake which, amongst other things, destroyed the principal repository of navigational and commercial information, the Casa da Índia. As for the former explanation, it should be pointed out that no one could stop sailors blabbing in taverns, nor could foreigners like Columbus and Martin Behaim, who sailed on Portuguese ships, be prevented from passing on information. Defecting Portuguese cartographers, like Diogo Ribeiro, took ‘secret’...
information with them, and he at least, in the 1520s, had no difficulty in keeping in touch with the progress of Portuguese discoveries, as his successive world maps show. In 1501, an Italian diplomat was able to send off a detailed report about Pedro Álvares Cabral’s voyage to India and back, within four days of the first ship’s return. The following year, an Italian agent managed to purchase and send to Italy the ‘secret’ world map known as the ‘Cantino’. Since no record of the contents of the Casa da Índia prior to its destruction has survived, claims that it had contained a fabulous collection of early Australiana are sheer fantasy. Both excuses have been used so frequently by some historians that one critic has somewhat facetiously remarked that the absence of proof regarding the veracity of a dubious report had almost come to be accepted as the supreme proof that it was true.

**Fundamental flaws**

Propagandists have long known that, with constant repetition, many people can be persuaded to believe practically anything. The unquestioning, active cooperation of the media, some school syllabuses, and even one or two historians, has made indoctrination only too easy. Numbers of articles in academic journals have pointed out some of the fundamental flaws in the Portuguese ‘discovery’ case, yet with one or two honourable exceptions, the popular press has ignored them, and the Portuguese ‘priority’ thesis has caught the public imagination and come to be widely and uncritically accepted as established fact. One of the latest claims is in an article in *O Português na Austrália* (19.4.1995) entitled ‘Portugal had a colony in Australia in the 16th century’!

**Healthy scepticism needed**

The study of history, especially when facts and their interpretation are in dispute, requires that the supposed evidence and its interpretation should be submitted to scrupulous, unbiased, critical evaluation by scholarship of the highest standards. This, of course, entails relying, to the greatest extent possible, on original documents, or photographic reproductions of them sufficiently large to render them clearly legible. It also entails being aware that even the writers of original documents may have been careless, relied on
faulty information, or had their own reasons for telling lies. Secondary sources should be regarded with a healthy degree of scepticism, not only because they must be one or more stages removed from the original sources, but also because their authors’ motives may be suspect as well. When any author propounds a thesis based on a predetermined conviction, there is an inherent risk that supposed evidence may tend to be selected and interpreted in such a way as to support that conviction. This may well result in the propagation of sensational, headline-catching misinformation, the ‘bending’, or even the fabrication of ‘evidence’, and the omission, or suppression of evidence which runs counter to the author’s beliefs. Most readers are seldom inclined to check on the veracity of statements made by someone regarded as an authority, even if they are capable of doing so; they accept them in good faith, especially if they happen to confirm their own beliefs. Statements made by any ‘authority’ who does not provide detailed information concerning the sources used should be regarded as potentially suspect. If much of the relevant information is in a language or languages unknown to the reader or author, both should be aware that translations are not infrequently unreliable. They should only be used as a last resort, and be checked by a really competent linguist.

It is high time that the media and the public were made aware that the supposed evidence hitherto produced in support of the claimed Portuguese discovery of Australia amounts to no more than an amalgam of rumour, imaginative speculation and wishful thinking, some of it presented in apparently respectable academic garb. What follows endeavours to draw attention to some of the evidence which refutes both the Spanish and Portuguese claims, indicating in footnotes the whereabouts of primary sources, and where more detailed treatment of specific points may be found.

Spanish claims to have discovered Australia have been convincingly refuted long ago, but at least in South Australia, one has recently been revived by the foundation of an association calling itself La Hermandad de la Tierra del Espíritu Santo or ‘Brotherhood of the Land of the Holy Spirit’.

Wishful thinking

A blinkered reading
It is stated by this body that it is so called because it was the name given to Australia by Pedro Fernandes de Queirós in 1606. This belief was apparently first propounded in Australia by Cardinal P. F. Moran in 1895, and is based primarily on an astonishingly blinkered reading of part of Queirós’s 8th relación or report, in an incredibly bad French translation which does not correctly render the name given to the land by Queirós¹. Cardinal Moran, on the basis of Queirós’s description of the Bahía de San Felipe y Santiago (‘Bay of Saint Philip and St James’), equated it with Port Curtis (Gladstone), despite the fact that Queirós gave the latitude of the former remarkably correctly as 15° 20’ S, when the latter is 23° 51’ S. This is a clear case of wishful thinking disregarding evidence contrary to an individual’s conviction.

Queirós was a Portuguese navigator in charge of a Spanish exploratory voyage in the Pacific. He claimed that he had discovered ‘the fourth part of the world’, rendered ‘fifth part’ in the French translation, by which he meant Terra Australis, the ‘Southern Land’ which had long been believed to exist. He unsuccessfully bombarded Philip III of Spain with relaciones, in an attempt to get government support for its exploration and colonisation. It is quite astonishing that anyone could read Queirós’s 8th relacion and believe that it contains a description of any part of Australia. There is not the slightest doubt regarding what he actually discovered. It was one of the islands of Vanuatu which is still called Espiritu Santo. The name he gave it was actually la Australia [note the spelling] del Espíritu Santo, a flattering (and punning) reference to Philip III, who belonged to the Hapsburg House of Austria. Vanuatu was the nearest Queirós got to Australia, for after leaving it, he proceeded to the Philippines. Yet Cardinal Moran’s influence was such that for years Catholic schools taught that Queirós discovered Australia.

¹ Carlos Sanz (ed.), Australia: su descubrimiento y denominación, Madrid (1973), contains facsimile reproductions of the original Spanish text of Queirós’s 8th memorial, and of several translations, including the French 1617 one.

(b) Clements R. Markham (ed.), The Voyages of Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, London (1904), contains an English translation, pp. 477-486.
One of Queirós’s captains, Luis Váez de Torres, certainly sailed through the strait that bears his name between Papua-New Guinea and Cape York, and it is sometimes claimed that he ‘discovered’ Australia. Brett Hilder’s scholarly study of Torres’ route makes it abundantly clear that, though he may well have seen Cape York, it would have appeared to him as just one of a number of islands. That does not constitute a discovery.

The claim that the Portuguese discovered Australia was not originally made by a Portuguese, but was suggested by the British hydrographer, Alexander Dalrymple, as late as 1786. He was an enthusiastic publicist for the claims, both real and spurious, made by Spanish and Portuguese mariners regarding discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere. His suggestion was based primarily on his examination of the so-called Dauphin or Harleian map, one of the famous French manuscript maps emanating from Dieppe in the mid-16th century. Most of them, though not all, show a large land mass south of, and partially attached to, Java and Sumbawa. It is usually referred to as Jave-la-Grande or Java-la-Grande (‘Great Java’). Dalrymple thought he saw a resemblance between the east coast of this land mass and that of Australia. It is these Dieppe maps that are still regarded by many as the most persuasive, prima facie evidence of a Portuguese ‘discovery’ of Australia in the early 16th century, since Jave-la-Grande is held to be an incomplete map of it, there being no southern coast. The early 1520’s are particularly favoured. Kenneth McIntyre (1977), Roger Hervé (1982), and Brigadier Lawrence FitzGerald (1984) are the

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4 (a) Roger Hervé, *Chance Discovery of Australia and New Zealand by Portuguese and Spanish Navigators between 1521 and 1528*, Palmerston North (1983). Page references in my text are to this work which is a translation by John Dunmore of:
(b) *Découverte fortuite de l’Australie et de la Nouvelle Zélande par des navigateurs portugais et espagnols entre 1521 et 1528*, Paris (1982).
most recent authors of books supporting the Portuguese discovery claim. Kenneth McIntyre's book has undoubtedly been the most influential, its paperback edition being for some years a set text in Victorian secondary schools, an interesting parallel to Cardinal Moran's influence on a school syllabus. Of the articles supporting the claimed discovery, Ian McKiggen's first one has been the most influential.\(^6\)

However, before proceeding to examine the claims made on the basis of the Dieppe maps, I will deal briefly with the other, non-cartographic, so-called evidence of Australia's discovery by the Portuguese suggested by Kenneth McIntyre and others.

The 'Portuguese' cannon found on Carronade Island in 1916, and proclaimed by McIntyre to be 'the most tangible extant link with the first European discovery of Australia' (p. 73), have since been metallurgy examined, and shown by Jeremy Green, curator of the West Australian Maritime Museum not to date from the 16th century. They are probably 18th century SE Asian copies of European weapons, and may well have been left on the island by Macassan trepangers.\(^7\)

McIntyre suggests, admittedly somewhat tentatively, that what he refers to as the 'fort' at Bittangabee, may have been the winter quarters constructed by the Portuguese navigator Cristóvão de Mendonça, his hypothetical discoverer of Australia's east coast. Mike Pearson, of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, has shown that the 'fort' does not date from the 16th century either, but is the remains of a

\(^6\) (a) Ian McKiggen, 'The Portuguese expedition to Bass Strait in AD 1522', *Journal of Australian Studies*, 1 (June 1977), pp. 2-32.

Ian McKiggen's alternative explanation for the 'distortion' of Jave-la-Grande's east coast is commented on in the following two articles:
(d) ——, 'Jave-la-Grande hypotheses', JAS, 21 (Nov. 1987), pp. 96-100.

\(^7\) Jeremy Green, 'The Carronade guns and Australia's early visitors', *The Great Circle*, vol. 4, no. 2 (Oct. 1982), pp. 73-83.
never-completed building erected by the Imlay brothers in the 1830's or 1840's.8

The famous 'Geelong Keys', which McIntyre suggests may have belonged to Mendonça or some member of his crew, disappeared during the last century, so are not available for scientific examination. However, E. D. Gill and P. F. B. Alsop have shown by radiocarbon dating of matter at the site of the supposed first sighting of the keys, that they could not possibly have been 16th century ones.9

The so-called 'Mahogany Ship', after years of searching, and even despite the offer of a vast Victorian Government reward for its discovery, remains obstinately hidden. Being, like the 'Geelong Keys', not available for examination, it lends itself to endless flights of fancy regarding its identity, but, of course, any claims regarding it must inevitably be nothing more than sheer speculation.

Two claims made, not by Kenneth McIntyre, but in the press, are worth mentioning. One concerns the supposed retrieval from a wreck off the South Australian coast a few years ago, of what were stated to be old Portuguese coins. The Italian fisherman who reputedly found them, took them illegally to Italy, and neither they nor he can apparently be traced. Even if they were what is claimed, that would not prove that they came from a Portuguese ship, since Portuguese coinage was a common trading currency in SE Asia.

The press has publicised Carl von Brandenstein’s so far unsubstantiated belief that some Aboriginal languages in the north-west of Western Australia contain Portuguese, or creole Portuguese words. If this should prove true, it would not, in

(b) In response to an editorial query in the same issue (p. 75), Gill and Alsop added a brief addendum in a letter to the editor, Investigator, vol. 18, no. 4 (Dec. 1983), p. 143.
itself, constitute evidence of a Portuguese discovery. It is well known that there has long been contact between Aborigines and *trepang* fishermen from Sulawesi. Since Malay and Portuguese were both trading languages in SE Asia and Indonesia, Aborigines could well have acquired a few Portuguese words from them. Yet on the strength of this ‘evidence’, von Brandenstein has hypothesised the existence of a Portuguese colony in Australia for at least 70 years, together with slaves imported from Africa. One press headline quoted earlier has turned his hypothesis into an established ‘fact’.

The above-mentioned rumours and speculation, though fruitful matter for the construction of popular myths and sensationalist copy, do not constitute evidence, so let us revert to the supposed cartographic evidence.

**Jave-la-grande**

As the name implies, the Dieppe maps were made in France. The landmass of *Jave-la-Grande* contains coastal inscriptions in French, Portuguese and Gallicised Portuguese, while the language of a few is not immediately identifiable. The number of inscriptions on the east and west coasts varies considerably from map to map. It is, of course, the presence of Portuguese words on this landmass, very roughly in the position of Australia, that has been the prime reason for the Portuguese ‘discovery’ claim.

**A number of problems**

Those proponents of the ‘discovery’ who have sought to prove that *Jave-la-Grande* is Australia have been faced with a number of problems. My figure, which superimposes the Dauphin, or Harleian map’s outline of the landmass on the modern map of the area shows some of them. If *Jave-la-Grande* is Australia, then several points need to be explained:

1. Why has ‘Australia’ been placed some 5° too far north, and much too far west, some 25°, so far, in fact, that Timor appears off its north-east coast?

2. How is it that Java and Sumbawa seem to have been confused with Arnhem Land and Cape York Peninsula respectively?
3. Why is it that an incredibly vivid imagination is required to see any similarity between its west coast and that of Australia?

4. Although the upper part of Jave-la-Grande’s east coast does perhaps bear some superficial resemblance to the ‘corresponding’ part of Australia’s east coast, how can one

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South-East Asia, Indonesia and Australia with the Harleian (Dauphin) map’s outline of Java, Sumbawa and Jave-la-Grande superimposed. The comparison is based on the assumption that the north coasts of Java and Sumbawa should coincide on the two maps and that the rest of each map is on the same scale. The Harleian map’s scale, however, is far from being consistent overall, since the latitude of cap de fremose, according to the latitude scale passing down the middle of the Atlantic, should be about 46° S, south of Tasmania, not just north of Cape Howe. This superimposition thus shortens the east coast of Jave-la-Grande by some 13°, or about 1500 kilometres.

Drawn by Jens Smith, Flinders University of South Australia.
explain the huge triangular promontory culminating in *c[ap] de fremose*, since there is no ‘corresponding’ counterpart to it on the map of Australia?

5. Why is the portrayal of the east and west coasts so badly ‘distorted’?

6. Any superimposition map such as mine must inevitably assume that some feature known to be common to both maps must be made to coincide – in this case the north coasts of Java and Sumbawa, according to the place-names. This necessarily entails accepting not merely that the longitude scales of the two maps are the same, but also the latitude scales. The latitude scale passing down the middle of the Atlantic on the Dauphin map shows South America and Africa to be reasonably correctly scaled. However, if *Java-la-Grande* is Australia, its latitude scale is disastrously wrong, for *cap de fremose*, which on my figure appears to be slightly north of Cape Howe, is actually some 9° of latitude, about 1000 kilometres, further south! How can such an error have arisen?

*Suggested solutions*

The answers proposed to these problems are as follows:

1/2. The French are *assumed* to have somehow obtained a Portuguese map of Australia (minus its south coast), and incorrectly incorporated it on a world map. They are *assumed* to have been unable to identify the east and west coasts from their placenames, and consequently confused Java and Sumbawa with Arnhem Land and Cape York from shape alone. Another related *assumption* has to do with the Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494, which had divided the world into two spheres of interest, those of Portugal and Spain, respectively east and west of a line of longitude in the Atlantic. It is *suggested* that this *hypothetical* Portuguese map of Australia may have been intentionally shown significantly west of its true position in order to bring as much of it as possible within the Portuguese sphere, and thus discourage Spain from exploring in the area. Proponents of this latter *hypothesis* have all failed to realise that this could only have been done by indicating
longitude on the hypothetical Portuguese map, and this was not done on area maps of the first half of the 16th century, because it was so difficult to accurately measure it until the latter part of the 18th century. Even on world maps it was very seldom done. Jean Rotz’s twin hemisphere world map is the only Dieppe map to do so.

3. The manifest failure of the west coasts to coincide is dealt with by imagining ‘corresponding’ features which only exist in the eyes of beholders who have a preconceived conviction that Jave-la-Grande is Australia. This particularly applies in the case of Lawrence FitzGerald’s ‘definitive’ solution. He relies on 19th century lithographic reproductions of three maps, not on the originals, and shifts from one to another in search of ‘corresponding’ features.

4/5. Kenneth McIntyre maintains that the distorted shape of what he claims is Australia is due to what he claims were errors in Portuguese cartographical method, though he does not give examples of the results of these supposed errors anywhere else in the world. His explanation of them consists of a long, complicated mathematical treatise on loxodromes and erration, which the majority of his readers are almost certainly quite unable to follow. It also involves the hypothetical extrapolation of magnetic variation back four and a half centuries. Captain Ariel, a master mariner and ship’s captain, has shown that McIntyre’s navigational calculations are based on a fundamental misunderstanding of loxodromes. He has also shown that the magnetic variation extrapolation is quite inadmissible as evidence, since it is sheer speculation and thus impossible to verify. Summing up, he states that McIntyre’s navigational ‘arguments are based on false premises’ and so ‘are totally invalid’.

6. The difficulty of establishing the identity of the key east coast feature, cap de fremose, is best illustrated by the fact that no less than four different locations have been

10 Captain A. Ariel, ‘Navigating with Kenneth McIntyre’, *The Great Circle*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Oct. 1984), pp. 135-139; see p. 135.
proposed, Tasmania's north-east cape (Brigadier FitzGerald), Tasmania's most southerly headland (Roger Hervé in 1955), the East Cape of New Zealand's North Island (Roger Hervé in 1982), and Cape Howe (Kenneth McIntyre and Ian McKiggan), though for different reasons!

Dogmatic assertions

McIntyre himself realised that even his 'correction' of the supposed Portuguese cartographical errors was not sufficient to explain adequately the failure of cap de fremose to correspond to what he claims is SE Australia either side of Cape Howe, so he produced another hypothetical, purpose-built explanation. He dogmatically asserts, with no supporting evidence whatsoever, that Portuguese cartographers initially incorporated all new information on globes. He asserts that in order to make maps, they then peeled off the separate sections, or gores, laid them flat, and then 'vamped in freehand links' (p. 156) to join up any coastlines which had been dislocated in the process. He does not state what type of glue enabled such an operation to have been effected. He then applies this theory to his prime problem area, the vicinity of cap de fremose. He maintains that the result, illustrated in his Figs. 11.4 and 14.2.IV, explains the 'tilting' of what he claims is SE Australia to the angle of the cap de fremose promontory. Captain Ariel has pointed out a fundamental error in McIntyre's own figures, for if the process he hypothesises is applied to the problem area, the two ends of the dislocated coastline should join up again if the 'vamped in' section is removed. They do not do so. Three leading world authorities I have consulted know of not one single map where the incredible globe gore map construction process that McIntyre describes can be shown to have been used. Yet McIntyre claims that this method 'has a long and honoured place in the history of cartography' (p. 156)

Embarrassing difference

There is yet another absolutely vital anomaly concerning McIntyre's attempt to equate cap de fremose with Cape Howe and the coast either side of it. As mentioned above, there is a difference of some 9° of latitude between Cape Howe and cap

11 Ibid., p. 137 and figure on p. 138.
de fremose. At a time when Portuguese mariners could measure latitude to within 1° or less, McIntyre glosses over this embarrassing difference of what he gives as 7°, by calling it ‘a tolerable error’ (p. 252).

It will be observed that the above arguments consist of a whole series of assumptions and hypotheses, not one of which has been proved. Some other aspects of Kenneth McIntyre’s methodology need to be exposed.

One concerns the use made of the ‘evidence’ provided by thoroughly unreliable sources, especially Manuel Godinho de Erédia, a minor cartographer of Portuguese-Macassarese parentage, whose works have not surprisingly puzzled all those who have studied them. It is noteworthy that official reports to Lisbon during and after his lifetime commented unfavourably on him and his works\(^\text{12}\). With good reason, the late Professor Luís de Albuquerque, in a private communication to me, described him as um mitómano (‘a compulsive liar’). My own detailed studies of Erédia suggest that he was a gullible man, with a lot of ill-digested learning, who had an ambition to discover the lands he believed lay south of Indonesia\(^\text{13}\). His conception of the area, which he evidently never visited himself, was necessarily an amalgam of Mercator’s and Gastaldi’s different graphic versions, which were both imaginative ones based on errors in two specific editions of Marco Polo’s Travels published in 1532\(^\text{14}\). Into this

\(^{12}\) Armando Cortesão and Avelino Teixeira da Mota, Portugaliae Monimenta Cartographica (PMC) Lisbon, 1960, 6 vols; see vol. IV, p. 41.


\(^{14}\) (a) The editions concerned are contained in Simon Grynaeus (ed.), Novus Orbis Regionum ac Insularum Veteribus Incognitarum, Basle and Paris (1532).

(b) For a study of the effects of these errors see: W. A. R. Richardson.
‘cartographical nightmare’ Erédia wove stories and/or legends of rumoured voyages, and one or more almost certainly fictitious ones of his own invention. Every scrap of supposed information about the area that he could lay hands on he interpreted in such a way as to confirm his own beliefs. Kenneth McIntyre’s treatment of the Jave-la-Grande = Australia theory makes use of very similar tactics. One example based on a passage in one of Erédia’s works is worth quoting.

As an illustration of ‘the crossing from Timor to Australia’ of ‘an incontestably white Portuguese’, McIntyre cites the case of a certain Francisco Resende, ‘who after taking a cargo of sandalwood at Timor was blown many leagues to the south-east. Calculating his distance and his bearing, his landfall was probably the western side of the tip of Cape York peninsula’ (p. 65). This account was based on the following passage in Erédia’s Tratado Ophirico (1616): ‘Francisco de Rezende of Malacca, in a junk, off its course from Timor, arrived at this Iawa Maior’ (my translation and italics). He goes on to mention that the Jaos (lit. ‘Javanese’, i.e. more loosely, ‘Indonesians’) of the country would not let anyone ashore, but that nevertheless they found gold, in water up to their waists. It will be observed that Erédia mentions neither Rezende’s skin colour, nor sandalwood, nor a storm, nor any distance or direction. Those features are all embroidery on McIntyre’s part, as also is the apparent equation of Iawa Maior with Jave-la-Grande, and Jave-la-Grande with Australia. He omits the references to Jaos and to the finding of gold, since both clearly do not indicate Australia, gold not having been

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15 Op. cit. in note 13 (a), passim, and op. cit. in note 13 (b), pp. 6-10.
16 (a) M. G. de Erédia, Tratado Ophirico, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. portugais, 44, f. 55v.
discovered anywhere in the country until the 19th century. With 'evidence' such as this one could prove anything.

Regrettably, many of McIntyre’s dogmatic statements which are quite unconnected with his navigational ‘correction’ theories are demonstrably false. His Chapter 6 (‘India Meridional’) alone provides a goodly array of examples. It deals primarily with material culled from Erédia. The first two examples may be considered nit-picking, but they illustrate his consistent lack of attention to detail. The remainder are serious errors of fact, and inexcusable:

1. McIntyre states that Erédia’s ‘unpublished Tratado Ophirico [is] in the British Museum’ (p. 75). It is actually in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.\(^\text{17}\)

2. He states that Erédias’s ‘most famous book [’The Declaration of Malacca’] ... was published in Malacca’ (p. 75). It was not ‘published’ there. It remained in manuscript until the 19th century.\(^\text{18}\)

3. Having referred to descriptions of a vast southern continent by two Portuguese ‘authorities’, McIntyre goes on to state that ‘by 1569 this Portuguese conception of the existence and shape of Australia had found its way into the international maps of Mercator and his colleagues’ (p. 74). There is no evidence that the two descriptions mentioned, those of Jean Alfonse (João Afonso)\(^\text{19}\) and Gabriel Rebello\(^\text{20}\), are anything but fictitious, and they certainly do not prove that the Portuguese had any idea of the existence

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\(^\text{17}\) See note 16 (a).

\(^\text{18}\) (a) M.G. de Erédia, _Declaracion de Malaca e India Meridional com o Cathay_ (1613), Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, Ms. 7264.
(b) ———, _Malaca, l’Inde Méridionale et le Cathay_, a facsim. edn with a French translation by L. Janssen, Brussels (1882).
(c) For an annotated English translation see op. cit in note 16 (b).

\(^\text{19}\) Jean Alfonse [Alfonso], _Les voyages avantageux du capitaine Ian Alfonse, Saintongeois_. Poitiers, 1559, ff. 34r & v, 35v and 36r.

\(^\text{20}\) Gabriel Rebello, cited in Jaime Cortesão, _Descobrimentos portugueses – V_ (Obras Completas, vol. 25), Lisbon, (1976), p. 1286. The date of the quotation, 1569, long after Mercator’s southern continent had first appeared, on his globe goes of 1541, is significant, a case of which came first, the chicken or the egg.
and shape of Australia by 1569. Mercator's southern continent bears no resemblance to the descriptions mentioned, apart from the fact that both portray a coastline proceeding both east and west from Tierra del Fuego's north coast to the vicinity of Java. Nor do the descriptions bear any resemblance to *Java-la-Grande*. Mercator's southern continent owes nothing whatsoever to Portuguese sources, as both Jaime Cortesão and McIntyre claim. It was his own invention, based primarily on the two defective editions of Marco Polo's *Travels*\textsuperscript{21}. The careless replacement of 'south of Champa', a kingdom in central Vietnam, by 'south of Java', gave rise to the idea that places called *Beach / Locac(h)*, *Java Minor*, etc. were south of Java. The effects of this one error persisted on some maps for over a century. Mercator's southern continent did not first appear in 1569, as Jaime Cortesão and McIntyre state, but on his globe gores of 1541, twenty-eight years earlier\textsuperscript{22}, a fact they were evidently not aware of. In 1566, three years before Mercator's 1569 world map, one of the Dieppe cartographers, Guillaume Le Testu, abandoned his 1556 portrayal of a southern continent containing *Java-la-Grande*, and replaced it by another showing obvious signs of being derived from Mercator's\textsuperscript{23}. McIntyre nowhere mentions this map or its significance.

4. He states that 'the whole of the present State of Western Australia [was] known to the Portuguese as “India Meridional”' (p. 67). It was not. The term, meaning 'Southern India', in contradistinction to *India Superior* (north of China), was applied by some early 16th century cartographers, in its Latin form, *India Meridionalis*, to identify a confused, second SE Asian peninsula version of what we now know as SE Asia. The feature was an

\textsuperscript{21} For a small scale reproduction of Mercator’s map see Rodney W. Shirley, *The Mapping of the World*, London (1983), p. 102; for a study of how the errors arose, see op. cit. in note 14 (b) above.

\textsuperscript{22} Reproduced in Shirley, op. cit., pl. 68.

adaptation by Martellus of Ptolemy’s southward extension of China. *India Meridionalis* is nearly always shown north of the Equator. Erédia is the only Portuguese cartographer to use the term ‘India Meridional’, and he applies it to the area south of Indonesia, which he represents in at least half-a-dozen different ways, a clear indication that he had no idea whatsoever of what it was really like. McIntyre, however, on no authority whatsoever, writes ‘India Meridional’ on Australia on his Figs. 4.2, 5.2 and 25.1.

5. Elsewhere he writes: ‘Manoel Godinho de Erédia says that the trepang-fishing in Australian waters had been going on for six hundred years, with a lengthy break in the middle’ (p. 71). I can find no mention whatsoever of trepang-fishing in any of Erédia’s works, let alone in ‘Australian waters’, since there is no indication anywhere that he had any idea of Australia’s existence. The figure of 600 years and ‘a lengthy break in the middle’ seem to be a muddled recollection of Erédia’s confused statement regarding the quite fictional cessation of trade between Java Major and Java Minor for 331 years, a matter I have examined in detail elsewhere.

6. Referring to Erédia’s ‘chapter’ entitled ‘India Meridional’, McIntyre states: ‘The title itself shows that he is writing about Western Australia, as do the contents of the chapter’ (p. 75). As shown above, the title does not show that he is writing about Western Australia, nor do the contents of the ‘chapter’. It starts by describing India Meridional as being the mainland of Beach, Maletur, and Lucach, and islands including Petan, Necuran and Agania. In other words, Erédia is describing part of Mercator’s fictitious, Marco Polo-based southern continent. A very similar passage in his *Tratado Ophirico* goes on to extend India Meridional ‘as far as the Land of Parrots’, another part of Mercator’s southern landmass. The name, originally applied to Brazil,

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24 For examples, see Shirley, op. cit., pls 31, 40 and 45.
25 See *PMC*, vol. IV, pls 411C, 412A & I, 414A & B, and 419B; or op. cit. in note 13 (a), figs 1.2.5.6.8 and 9.
26 See op. cit. in note 13 (a), pp. 251-2.
27 *Declaraciam de Malaca*, f. 50r & v; Mills, pp. 60-61.
became transferred to the non-existent southern continent by a complicated process which I have explained elsewhere.  

7. One voyage mentioned by Erédia is stated by McIntyre to have received ‘dramatic confirmation’ in 1946, by the discovery in Rio de Janeiro of one particular map. He goes on: ‘That crew, [specifically stated by Erédia to be Chinese] on Erédia’s uncontradicted testimony, sailed to and reached the Kimberley Coast in 1599 or 1600’ (p. 76). This is pure fiction on McIntyre’s part, despite his Fig. 6.1, which purports to compare the ‘confirmatory’ map with what he claims is the equivalent area, north and west of Brunswick Bay. His text comments: ‘Here we have an actual map, with an actual track marked, and a calculable point of landfall’ (p. 77). McIntyre’s figure is a sketch redrawing of a small part of the map concerned. He has omitted all those parts of Erédia’s map which clearly show that the part south of Indonesia is a fictitious creation based on Marco Polo. In fact, Erédia’s map is actually a copy, or close adaptation, of one by Gastaldi, of about 1560. Erédia had inserted fictitious routes to illustrate what may well have been fictitious voyages. McIntyre’s OURO (Isle of Gold) is not called OURO on Erédia’s map, but IAP. OURO is but the first of three products supposed to be available there; it happens to be in capitals, while the other two are in small letters. In another brief inscription just below it, Erédia repeats the information and adds one other product. By cutting off part of Erédia’s island of IAP, McIntyre suggests that it is part of the Australian coastline.

Before examining two other cases of McIntyre’s ‘redrawing’ of maps, it is worth pointing out that he does not give a single folio reference to any of Erédia’s original manuscripts, nor

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29 Reproduced in *PMC*, vol. IV, pl. 411C and in op. cit in note 13 (a), Fig. 1.

30 Reproduced in op. cit. in note 13 (a), fig. 7.
their library shelf marks, nor any page reference to their edited, annotated, English translations, whose very existence he fails to mention. In view of his heavy reliance on Erédia, one cannot help but wonder why.

Any simplified, partial, sketch redrawings of original maps are, by their very nature, ‘edited’, and can therefore very easily unintentionally produce a false impression. Regrettably, they can also be used to do so intentionally. I have explained elsewhere in detail that on McIntyre’s Fig. 16.3, his ‘redrawing’ of part of a map by Cornelis de Jode, he completely altered the unmistakably characteristic three-pronged shape of Gilolo (Halmahera), which de Jode had placed too far east, and then suggested that the island was really New Guinea31. Below it, de Jode names a cape and two rivers on a stretch of coastline which clearly identify it as a portrayal of New Guinea’s north coast, although incorrectly part of a fictitious southern continent. McIntyre’s redrawing omits these identifying names, presumably because he is trying to prove that the coast concerned is really Australia’s north coast. In fact he calls it ‘Cornelis de Jode’s map of Australia’ [my italics] (p. 230). As in the case of the redrawing of the Erédia/Gastaldi map (Fig. 6.1), he has also omitted to portray or name a number of islands whose presence would reveal their Marco Polo/Gastaldi, fictitious origin, and cause one to doubt the ‘evidence’ of the de Jode map.

McIntyre’s Fig. 25.1 purports to be an interpretative diagram of part of another of Erédia’s maps. The decidedly strange logic of the caption suggests that because the original bore an inscription indicating that Nuca Antara was discovered by Erédia in 1601, therefore ‘the good representation of the south-west coast of New Guinea (five years before Torres)’ must date from then. He is clearly implying that this is evidence of one or more Portuguese voyages along that coast before 1601. In fact, the map is not by Erédia at all, but by João

31 W. A. R. Richardson, ‘Jave-la-Grande: the interpretation of evidence’, The Globe (Journal of the Australian Map Circle), 26 (1986), pp. 42-57; see fig. 1 for a reproduction of the relevant part of de Jode’s map; for a complete reproduction, see Shirley, op. cit. pl. 149.
Teixeira I, and it is in a manuscript atlas of 1630\textsuperscript{32}! The original shows part of the real Australian coast just below the *Nuca Antara* inscription, and it bears an inscription stating that it was discovered by the Dutch, who called it *Endracht*. Did McIntyre really not realise that by omitting that part in his redrawing he was withholding from his readers incontrovertible evidence that the map must date, not from 1601, as he implies, but much later? Because of the *Endracht* inscription, it could not have been made earlier than 1616, well after Torres had sailed through the strait that bears his name (1606), and the Duuyfken had sailed along the south-west coast of New Guinea and into the Gulf of Carpentaria in the same year. By omitting the eastern edge of the original map, McIntyre’s figure leads one to believe that New Guinea was portrayed on it as an island; it was not – some twenty-four years after Torres! (It was a very poor, late copy of João Teixeira’s map that led R. H. Major into believing that Erédia had discovered Australia.) McIntyre’s identification of *Nuca Antara* as Sumba is false. Both the original, and his own partial redrawing, show Sumba correctly located, unnamed, immediately west of Timor. I have dealt in detail elsewhere with the identity of *Nuca Antara* and Erédia’s incredible carelessness with figures\textsuperscript{33}.

Erédia is not the only thoroughly unreliable source from whom Kenneth McIntyre culls supposed evidence. Another is Jean Alfonse, briefly mentioned above. He was almost certainly a renegade Portuguese pilot, João Alfonso, who defected to France, and served M. de Roberval as a pilot on the St Lawrence in 1542; his *routier* (pilot book) of that area has survived\textsuperscript{34}. His *Les voyages auantureux*, published in 1559, is partially a set of sailing directions, which is reasonably good for the time so far as South-Western Europe and the Mediterranean are concerned\textsuperscript{35}. However, when he deals with

\textsuperscript{32} Reproduced in *PMC*, vol. IV, pl. 464, and partially in op. cit. in note 13 (a) fig. 3.

\textsuperscript{33} See op. cit. in note 13 (a) pp. 250 and 253-255.

\textsuperscript{34} Jean Alfonse (Alfonso), ‘Le routier de Jean Alphonse de Xantogne...’, *Voyages de découverte au Canada*, pp. 82-96; Literary and Historical Society of Quebec. Historical Documents, series 1, no. 3 (1843).

\textsuperscript{35} See op. cit. in note 19, ff. 8v-26r and 36r-41r.
regions which were little known, or unknown, his account is extensively fictitious.

McIntyre apparently relies on a secondary source, Jaime Cortesão’s comments on the book, and not on Alfonse’s text, for he neither quotes from it, nor gives any folio references. He claims, via Cortesão, a well-known, but unreliable historian, that Alfonse ‘described a southern continent, commencing in the Antarctic regions and rising to tropical latitudes south and south-east of ‘Orphir’, which is either Timor or Flores’, and deduces that this shows ‘that the Portuguese had some knowledge of the existence of Australia’ (p. 74). As I pointed out before, it shows nothing of the sort. Elsewhere McIntyre, on what authority he does not say, states that Alfonse ‘had been a pilot in eastern waters, and probably had sailed with Sequeira’ (p. 111). If he had been, his knowledge of the area as revealed in his book is quite incredibly deficient. One only need compare it with the south-western European section of his *Les voyages auantureux*, or his St Lawrence rutter to see the difference. McIntyre goes on to say that ‘Alfonse describes a southern continent, its coasts corresponding almost point by point with the Australia of the Dauphin map’ (my italics). Even if one substitutes the correct name, *Jave-la-Grande*, this is quite untrue, as a reading of Alfonse’s actual text clearly shows. It is undoubtedly fictitious, and, despite Roger Hervé’s comments, bears no real resemblance to any of the Dieppe maps’ various fictitious outlines of a southern landmass. McIntyre’s ‘Orphir’, which Alfonse actually spells *Horphie, Sophie* and *Dorophie*, is, as Alfonse himself states, ‘the islands [sic] from which the gold was taken to Jerusalem to make the temple of Solomon’ (my translation). The paragraph in which that quotation appears is repeated almost verbatim in another part of the book, evidence of the haphazard manner in which his popular book was thrown together.

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36 Ibid. ff. 34r & v, 35v & 36r.
37 Ibid. f. 35r.
38 Ibid. f. 65v.
Sheer invention

Biblical Ophir, the Earthly Paradise, and Ptolemy’s Catigara, in various different spellings, were mythical places which wandered erratically around many 16th century maps trying to find house room. McIntyre’s identification of ‘Orphir’ with ‘either Timor or Flores’ is thus sheer invention. Martin Fernández de Enciso, an author whom Alfonse plagiarised, equated Ofir with Jocat (i.e. Locac)\(^{39}\), and at least one Dieppe cartographer, Guillaume Le Testu, writes Terre de Offir on what he calls Grande Jave itself\(^{40}\), and Jehan Mallart writes La Gatigare on the same landmass\(^{41}\), while the Dauphin map places CATIGARA in what is now Chile\(^{42}\).

A dubious source

As early as 1609 Marc Lescarbot made the following pertinent observation regarding Alfonse’s Les voyages aventurieux: ‘Well may he call his voyages adventurous, not for himself, for he never went to a hundredth part of the places he describes (at least it is easy so to conjecture), but for those who follow the routes he recommends to mariners’ (my translation)\(^{43}\). Anyone who has read Alfonse’s work carefully, free of any preconception regarding the identity of Jave-la-Grande, cannot possibly fail to agree with him. The fact that Alfonse felt it necessary to include a statement on his final page, asserting the reliability of his book\(^{44}\), is a fair warning to be wary of it! Quotations, or ‘facts’, taken out of context from any source, but especially one of this nature, can so easily be used to create an entirely false impression.

McIntyre not alone

McIntyre’s significant reliance on Erédia and Alfonse, two thoroughly dubious sources, is thus yet further reason for questioning his thesis. Roger Hervé makes little more than a passing reference to Erédia whom, nevertheless, he quite

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\(^{39}\) M. Fernández de Enciso, Suma de geographia. Seville (1519), folio g.vir.

\(^{40}\) Guillaume Le Testu, La cosmographie universelle selon les navigateurs (1556), Paris, Bibliothèque du Ministère des Armées, Cote D.I.Z. 14.

\(^{41}\) Reproduced in op. cit in note 4 (b) Fig. 3.


\(^{44}\) Op. cit. in note 19, f. 68v.
incredibly describes as ‘the famous explorer’ (p. 54)! He does, however, have a whole chapter devoted to the supposed evidence of Alfonse’s *Les voyages avantureux*, and his *La cosmographie*. It should not be thought that Kenneth McIntyre was the only writer to make quite unjustifiable, dogmatic statements. A few examples from Hervé’s *Chance Discovery of Australia and New Zealand* may illustrate this:

1. He states that ‘we know’ that João Afonso (i.e. Jean Alfonse) ‘sailed as far as western Australia (probably between 1518 and 1528)’ (p. 18). We know nothing of the sort. His claim seems to be based on a statement by Alfonse, which could conceivably, but by no means certainly, suggest that he had been to *la terre firme de Jave*. Hervé chooses to take for granted that by this Alfonse meant that he had been to *Jave-la-Grande*, and that that meant Australia, just what he is trying to prove. Yet *Jave-la-Grande* is but a French translation of the Portuguese *Java maior*, which was invariably used by them to indicate Java itself, as we know it, and not the Dieppe maps’ vast creation. (Erédia, the only exception, was erratic in his use of the name.) There are thus no grounds for Hervé’s statement.

2. He claims to have identified New Zealand on one of Le Testu’s maps portraying a complete southern continent (pp. 23–24), despite the fact that Le Testu specifically states that the part concerned is the product of his imagination!

3. Hervé quotes Alfonse’s observation that ‘Between Trop-bonne [Trapobane, i.e. Sumatra] and the firm land of Jave the sea is so dangerous that ships do not pass’ (p. 52). This is undoubtedly a reference to Sunda Strait, which later was the way all Dutch ships approached Batavia (Jakarta) from the Cape of Good Hope. Alfonse’s statement is

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45 Jean Alfonse, *La cosmographie...*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. français 676; published under the same title (ed. G. Musset), Paris (1904).
46 Ibid. f. 147r and p. 389 respectively. Hervé chooses to interpret this as a reference to Australia.
47 Guillaume Le Testu, op. cit. in note 40, ff. XXXIV, XXXV and XXXVI.
therefore false. Hervé apparently fails to appreciate this and goes on to equate it with George Collingridge’s *Andanae barcha* inscription (p. 59). Collingridge had misread two place-names between Java and Sumbawa, and then ‘translated’ them as if they were a Portuguese sentence meaning ‘No ships go here’, an error repeated in good faith by numerous commentators. Hervé seems to have failed to notice that he was equating a strait at the western end of Java with one at its eastern end!

4. Hervé identifies *c. de fremose* as the East Cape of New Zealand’s North Island, for which, he states: ‘we know the Dieppe map makers had the latitude and longitude’ (p. 46). His ‘evidence’ for this statement is one of Jean Rotz’s hemisphere maps. He was not the only Dieppe cartographer to include longitude. The Pierpont Morgan atlas also does, and its co-ordinates for features on the east coast of *Jave-la-Grande* differ considerably from Jean Rotz’s ones, by between 15° 30 and 23° 30°. In any case longitude could not be accurately measured until the latter part of the 18th century. Yet in support of his claim, Hervé superimposes Rotz’s outline of *Jave-la-Grande* on the modern map (Fig. 4 in the original French edition), and *c. de fremose* and the East Cape fail to correspond by some 6° of latitude, which compares interestingly with the 7° (or 9°) difference between *c. de fremose* and McIntyre’s ‘equivalent’, Cape Howe.

5. The following passage from Hervé should provide a salutary warning to readers not to put their trust too implicitly in ‘authorities’: ‘A whole set of clues point to a Portuguese presence as early as c. 1525 in this region [‘the Kimberley district’] which the great Mercator map of 1569 was to call *Provincia aurifera*, and Mota Alves, in 1602, would call *Ilha do Ouoro*’ (p. 54). Hervé appears to give no reason for the ‘c. 1525’ date. Mercator described the Beach

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50 See op. cit. in note 6 (c), especially pp. 87 and 89.
(i.e. Locach), part of his fictitious southern continent, as Provincia aurifera ('Province of gold'), because Marco Polo had said that there was a lot of gold (and elephants) there. He had actually been referring to part of Thailand, but the Champa/Java error we have examined caused the misplacement of Locach to south of Java. Provincia aurifera has nothing whatsoever to do with Australia. As for Mota Alves, he did not call anything Ilha do Ouro in 1602, or at any other time. McIntyre refers to his Fig. 6.1 as 'THE MOTA ALVES MAP', but makes it quite clear in the caption and in his text (p. 75) that Mota Alves was a researcher who discovered the map concerned, the Erédia/Gastaldi map we have already examined. Hervé was carelessly misled by McIntyre's caption heading, and his 'Isle of Gold' (Gastaldi's island of IAP), and his utterly unjustifiable association of it with Australia. Wishful thinking on the part of both McIntyre and Hervé completed the latter's entirely false statement.

DID YOU KNOW that state schools acknowledged deaths of soldiers in World War I by flying a flag at half-mast? The Geelong Advertiser of June 8, 1918, records one such example at Lara:

The flag at the State school was flying half-mast again yesterday, when word was received from the Defence Department that Pte. E.L. Hill had died from wounds received in action. The deceased soldier, who was 22 years of age, and who had been on active service for three years, was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Hill. The sympathy of the whole district goes out to the bereaved parents of one more Lara lad who has unselfishly laid down his life for King and Country.

CORRIGENDUM
On page 49 of Vol. 30, No. 2 (halfway down) the name Captain James E. Newman has crept in instead of Newland.